

# TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Utah Coal Regulatory Program


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July 18, 2008

TO: Internal File

THRU: James D. Smith, Permit Supervisor *DS 08/06/08*  
Steve Demczak, Lead *sgd by an*

FROM: Joseph C. Helfrich, Environmental Scientist/Biology/Land use/Cultural resources 

RE: Minor Coal Exploration Plan, Energy West Mining Company, Deer Creek Mine, C/015/0018, Amendment to Task ID #3012

## SUMMARY:

On July 18, 2008 the Division received an application from Energy West Mining Company to relocate drill hole # 2008-2 on the Manti La-Sal National Forest in Section 11, Township 16 South, Range 6 East Mill Fork Coal lease ML-48258. The exploration hole will be completed by helicopter drilling and is located on the trace of a reclaimed fire suppression access road.

This memo will address the cultural resource and Biology information for the relocation of drill hole # 2008-2.

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EXPLORATION TECHNICAL MEMO

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**EXPLORATION TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:**

**OPERATIONAL STANDARDS**

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.13; R645-202-100.

**Analysis:**

**Biology**

**R645-202-200**, Page 2 of the application includes a commitment to comply with the performance standards and conditions stated in the approval of task # 2944 and any associated Forest Service stipulations. Volume 12, Chapter 9, pages 3-1 through 3-5 and map, MFS1821D of the MRP describe the vegetative communities within the relocated drill site location.

An evaluation of the sensitive plant species within the Mill Fork Lease area is provided for on pages 3-3 and 3-4 of the MRP. Page 3-5, Paragraph 2 includes a reference to personal communication with Bob Thompson, Biologist for the Manti La-Sal National Forest. According to Mr. Thompson there are no T&E plant species within the Mill Fork lease area. Volume 12, Biology, Chapter 9, page 3-9, Paragraph 2 includes a reference to "*Environmental Assessment reports*", for the T&E animal species. The report is an Environmental Assessment, (EA), prepared by the Manti-La Sal National Forest personnel for the Mill Fork Lease by Application, (LBA), #11. Section C, "*Wildlife*", pages III-12 through III-14 provides an analysis of the wildlife species within the Mill Fork Lease area. According to the information there are no Threatened or Endangered wildlife species within the proposed Mill Fork Lease area. Also included with the application is a current list of Threatened and Endangered plant and animal species for the drill site locations, (Emery County).

As noted on pages 10 and 11 the Northern Goshawk is a "*management indicator specie*" for the Manti-LaSal National Forest. Forest Service Biologists have identified two territories associated with previous exploration drilling activities. They are identified on the 2007 raptor locations, flight path, and staging area map. The proposed flight paths are located such that they should not impact the birds or their territories.

**Findings:**

The information provided is adequate to meet the requirements of this section of the regulations.

## HISTORIC AND ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCE INFORMATION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 783.12; R645-301-411.

### Analysis:

A Class I literature search completed by Earth Touch Inc. for the relocated drill site was included in the previous 2 applications for the original 6 drill sites. SHPO concurrence for these exploration projects was received by the Division by "E" mail correspondence on March 4<sup>th</sup> for two of the sites and April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008 for the remaining four.

The application for the relocation of drill site # 2008-2 does not include a Cultural Resource Assessment. However the proposed location for the drill site is located on the trace of a reclaimed fire suppression access road.

Personal conversations with Dale Harber, (Geologist for the Manti La-Sal National Forest), Tom Lloyd, (North Zone Minerals Manager), and Charmane Thompson, (Archaeologist for the Manti La-Sal National Forest), on July 21, 2008 confirmed that a class III pedestrian survey would not be required in light of the pre-disturbance, low site potential, low impacts and steep topography.

### Findings:

The information is adequate to meet the requirements of this section of the regulations.

## RECLAMATION STANDARDS

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.13; R645-202-200.

### Analysis:

#### Revegetation

Page 2 of the application includes a commitment to comply with the performance standards and conditions stated in the approval of task # 2944 and any associated Forest Service stipulations.

### Findings:

The information provided is adequate to meet the requirements of this section of the regulations.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Pending concurrence from the SHPO the application is recommended for approval.

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